

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2012

0521

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As Members of Congress who strongly support the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) efforts to reform and strengthen the Universal Service Fund's Lifeline program, we write to express our view regarding the specific rulemaking actions approved on January 31, 2012. Specifically, we are concerned with the relatively short timeframe that the FCC has imposed for the implementation of "full certification", the requirement that consumers produce documentation of their participation in Lifeline-qualifying programs. Therefore, we request that the FCC allow service providers until January 2013 to implement the full certification rule.

We have closely monitored the Lifeline rulemaking process since it was first announced in November 2010, and are pleased that the FCC shares in our vision of a program that is accessible to qualifying consumers as well as free of waste, fraud, and abuse. While we remain concerned that the full certification requirement may have unintended consequences on Lifeline enrollment and access, we understand the rationale behind this particular rule. Moving forward, we simply ask that service providers be given additional time to prepare for the implementation of full certification.

Currently, many states do not have eligibility databases in place to ensure that enrollees qualify for, and are in true need of, Lifeline services. If full certification is implemented in these states, we fear that current and prospective Lifeline subscribers may lose vital access to telephone service. It is our understanding that this rule is scheduled to go into full effect on June 1st. Extending this deadline by seven months to January 2013 will allow carriers to work with state governments and establish databases that can be used to determine eligibility for Lifeline.

As you well know, Lifeline is of great importance to our most economically disadvantaged constituents, who would otherwise be unable to afford basic telephone service. Great strides have been made under your leadership to modernize the program and to make it more accessible to those in need. We are confident that the FCC's reforms will go a long way to make Lifeline stronger and more effective.

Chairman Genachowski, thank you for your consideration of our request to extend the implementation deadline for full certification until January 2013. We appreciate your continued commitment to meeting the communications needs of low-income Americans, and stand ready to assist you as the FCC implements much-needed reforms to Lifeline. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Ed Pastor
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



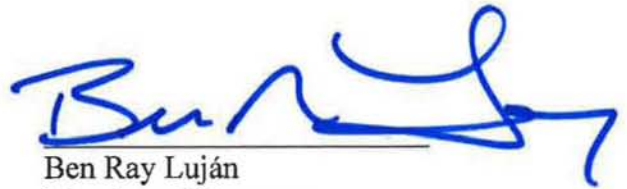
Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Joe Baca
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress



Larry Kissell
Member of Congress



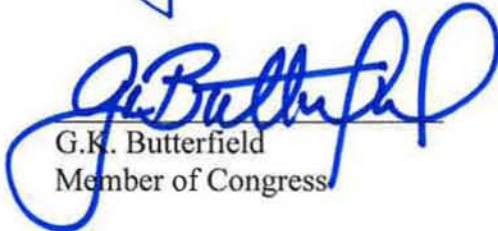
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



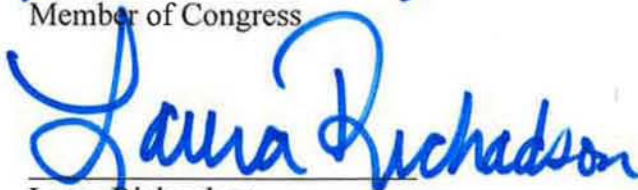
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress



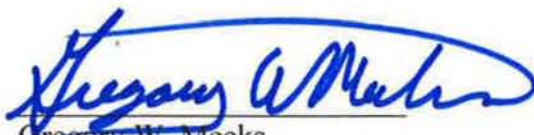
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Laura Richardson
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Brad Miller
Member of Congress


Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress


David Price
Member of Congress


Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Joe Baca
U.S. House of Representatives
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Baca:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

As you have noted, the Commission has made some tough choices in reforming the Lifeline program. In the certification requirement in the *Lifeline Reform Order*, the Commission balanced the urgent need to stem waste and abuse with the potential additional burden on certain consumers to obtain a Lifeline-supported service. After careful consideration, the Commission unanimously adopted the eligibility certification requirement as an interim step to verify the eligibility of all Lifeline recipients while it transitions to a national eligibility database. Providers have since developed a number of innovative solutions to ensure compliance with the requirement while minimizing consumer burden, while a national eligibility database is developed. The savings from the improved accountability among other things, are allowing the Commission to lay the groundwork for modernizing the Lifeline program to include broadband service, which we agree is critical for low-income Americans to benefit from the twenty-first century economy. Our steps are also ensuring a strong foundation for a strong and lasting Lifeline program.

I look forward to working with you further as the Commission continues its efforts to advance access to telecommunications and broadband for all Americans. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable George K. Butterfield
U.S. House of Representatives
2305 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Butterfield:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Russ Carnahan
U.S. House of Representatives
1710 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Carnahan:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable William Lacy Clay
U.S. House of Representatives
2418 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Clay:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
U.S. House of Representatives
2235 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cummings:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Sincerely,

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Ted Deutch
U.S. House of Representatives
1024 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Deutch:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Keith Ellison
U.S. House of Representatives
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ellison:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
U.S. House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Luis Gutierrez
U.S. House of Representatives
2266 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gutierrez:

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Alcee L. Hastings
U.S. House of Representatives
2353 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hastings:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Rubén Hinojosa
U.S. House of Representatives
2262 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hinojosa:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Larry Kissell
U.S. House of Representatives
1632 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Kissell:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Barbara Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lee:

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable John Lewis
U.S. House of Representatives
343 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lewis:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
U.S. House of Representatives
330 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Luján:

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Julius Genachowski



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June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks
U.S. House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Meeks:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Brad Miller
U.S. House of Representatives
1127 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Miller:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

As you have noted, the Commission has made some tough choices in reforming the Lifeline program. In the certification requirement in the *Lifeline Reform Order*, the Commission balanced the urgent need to stem waste and abuse with the potential additional burden on certain consumers to obtain a Lifeline-supported service. After careful consideration, the Commission unanimously adopted the eligibility certification requirement as an interim step to verify the eligibility of all Lifeline recipients while it transitions to a national eligibility database. Providers have since developed a number of innovative solutions to ensure compliance with the requirement while minimizing consumer burden, while a national eligibility database is developed. The savings from the improved accountability among other things, are allowing the Commission to lay the groundwork for modernizing the Lifeline program to include broadband service, which we agree is critical for low-income Americans to benefit from the twenty-first century economy. Our steps are also ensuring a strong foundation for a strong and lasting Lifeline program.

I look forward to working with you further as the Commission continues its efforts to advance access to telecommunications and broadband for all Americans. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
U.S. House of Representatives
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
2136 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Norton:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Ed Pastor
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pastor:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

As you have noted, the Commission has made some tough choices in reforming the Lifeline program. In the certification requirement in the *Lifeline Reform Order*, the Commission balanced the urgent need to stem waste and abuse with the potential additional burden on certain consumers to obtain a Lifeline-supported service. After careful consideration, the Commission unanimously adopted the eligibility certification requirement as an interim step to verify the eligibility of all Lifeline recipients while it transitions to a national eligibility database. Providers have since developed a number of innovative solutions to ensure compliance with the requirement while minimizing consumer burden, while a national eligibility database is developed. The savings from the improved accountability among other things, are allowing the Commission to lay the groundwork for modernizing the Lifeline program to include broadband service, which we agree is critical for low-income Americans to benefit from the twenty-first century economy. Our steps are also ensuring a strong foundation for a strong and lasting Lifeline program.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Pedro R. Pierluisi
U.S. House of Representatives
1213 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pierluisi:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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Julius Genachowski



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable David E. Price
U.S. House of Representatives
2162 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Price:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rangel:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Silvestre Reyes
U.S. House of Representatives
2210 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Reyes:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Laura Richardson
U.S. House of Representatives
1330 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Richardson:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
U.S. House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Roybal-Allard:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Scott:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Albio Sires
U.S. House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Sires:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Edolphus Towns
U.S. House of Representatives
2232 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Towns:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 15, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Melvin Watt
U.S. House of Representatives
2304 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Watt:

Thank you for your letter encouraging the Commission to postpone implementation of the new Lifeline eligibility certification requirements. I value your views and appreciate your support for the Commission's efforts to eliminate the waste and abuse in this important program. Your letter will be included in the Lifeline reform proceeding record for Commission consideration.

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